

Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
Annual Planning Retreat
“Maximizing Our Achievements”
Thursday, March 7, 2013, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Coast Phoenix Sky Harbor Hotel, 4300 East Washington Street, Phoenix

MEETING NOTES

Welcome and Introductions

Will Humble, Council Chairperson, and Larry Clausen, Executive Director, welcomed participants. Sheryl Matney, Technical Assistance Manager, National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, was introduced. Participants introduced themselves and shared the following: 1) one thing each would like to accomplish in 2013 in his/her role as Council member/staff, and 2) one personal goal each would like to accomplish in 2013. Goals for Council involvement included: clearer and more strategic focus on those activities that are most likely to lead to desired results, better attendance at meetings, greater internal and external awareness of the Council and its activities, expanded participation statewide and of persons from culturally distinct groups, increased self-advocacy and leadership of self-advocates, continued forward momentum and effectiveness, increased efficiency, greater embedding of Council work into Council members' own work, and better collaboration with the Division of Developmental Disabilities. The items mentioned by the most participants were increased awareness of the Council in the community and greater involvement/leadership of self-advocates.

Desired Results for Today's Retreat

The desired results for the retreat were: 1) agreement on updates to the State Plan objectives, 2) greater focus on actions that will lead to desired results, and 3) ideas for how to maximize the Council's impact. Related to the first desired result, Larry explained the process that would be used following the retreat to update the State Plan objectives. Recommendations for changes will go back to the three Council committees for their review and deliberation; the committee recommendations will be forwarded to the full Council for action. A public review period will be required, as well. Related to the second desired result, it was noted that the Council will be focusing on evaluation even more in the coming year than it has in the past. Evaluation is being built into all new Council funded projects. Related to the third desired result, Sheryl will be sharing ideas later in the agenda for how the Council can leverage its work to achieve maximal impact.

After a review of the day's agenda, participants considered the items of respect that had been used in last year's retreat and agreed to abide by the same guidelines this year. These were: 1) stay on agenda, 2) no side talking, and 3) cell phones off or muted.

Recap of Annual Focus Group and Follow-Up Survey

Larry shared some of the highlights of the annual stakeholder focus group that had been held on February 21 and the follow-up survey to which focus group invitees responded. A copy of the full report had been provided to participants in advance of the retreat. In the opinion of those who participated in the focus group, the greatest accomplishments of the Council in the past year included: 1) increased visibility and credibility of the Council statewide; 2) bringing self-advocacy organizations together; 3) providing electronically accessible, relevant, and useful information; and 4) the formation of valuable

new partnerships. There will be new opportunities to: 1) reach and engage new people and groups, 2) to promote better understanding of self-advocacy, and 3) to engage self-advocates in new venues, such as healthcare discussions.

In the ensuing discussion at the retreat, it was noted that work needs to continue to reach more people, possibly through the use of social media. Participants commented that the Latino community, including monolingual Spanish-speaking members, should be a priority. The Council can achieve this by working with and through other advocacy groups that are connected to the Latino community.

It was also noted that the Council will need to take an active role in getting information out and bringing people together on a variety of salient policy issues in the coming year, but that the Council will need to be cautious in taking positions because of its authorizing legislation.

Legislative Update

Skip Brown, Traaen and Associates, provided an update on legislative proposals and actions of relevance to the Council. He concluded that legislators are generally well-disposed toward the Council. Traaen and Associates will continue to provide weekly updates to keep Council members informed. A copy of his slides is available.

Recommended Changes to the State Plan Objectives

The Chairs of the three Council committees were interviewed individually by the facilitator, B. J. Tatro, regarding the outcomes of their committee mini-retreats, which were held in the month prior to the retreat. At the mini-retreats, committee members had reviewed their goals, objectives, projected outcomes, funded projects, and other strategies in order to determine if all were in alignment and whether current action would be likely to lead to desired outcomes.

Self-Advocacy Committee

Tom Uno, Self-Advocacy Committee Chairperson, reviewed his committee's current objectives and proposed changes and shared his committee's ideas about how the Council could maximize its achievements and impact through new/continued contracts, staff work, Council member work, partnerships, and leveraging. Tom underscored the importance of expanding the concept of self-advocacy to include leadership development and opportunities. Tom's comments are included in the Self-Advocacy Committee's report for the retreat, which was provided to participants prior to the retreat.

Comments from participants included the following:

- A shared definition of self-advocacy is needed.
- There was a question about whether families would be included in advocacy. They would be. Sheryl informed participants that the Federal self-advocacy goal language is being modified slightly to make this clear. While there is ongoing discussion about the role of families and individual self-determination, there was considerable agreement that families can play a key role in supporting the success of persons with developmental disabilities of all ages.
- Concern was expressed about ensuring that self-advocacy activities do not inadvertently compete with desired results, e.g., scheduling advocacy meetings during the day when self-advocates need to be at their jobs.

- It was noted that leadership development needs to start with young persons and that it needs to be intentional. This could be achieved by partnering with existing youth development programs, particularly those that are not necessarily focused on youth with disabilities. It was recommended that this be added to the objectives.
- Some liked the language of “leadership training” or “empowerment training” better than “self-advocacy training.”

Integrated Employment Committee

John Black, Integrated Employment Committee Chairperson, reviewed his committee’s current objectives and proposed changes and shared his committee’s ideas about how the Council could maximize its achievements and impact through new/continued contracts, staff work, Council member work, partnerships, and leveraging. John highlighted the desire of the committee to move toward more outcome oriented objectives that focus on readiness of the person for employment, readiness of employers, and policies that are conducive to employment. John’s comments are included in the Integrated Employment Committee’s report for the retreat, which was provided to participants prior to the retreat.

Comments from participants included the following:

- There may well be opportunities for integrated employment in government agencies at all levels, not only in the private sector, and these opportunities should be explored. The creation of coops was also mentioned, as was the possibility of Council members and the organizations for which they work hiring persons with disabilities.
- The Council should explore post-secondary education and training.
- The role of the Council is to develop and promulgate models, not to become a service provider.
- There are policies that inhibit integrated employment, e.g., lack of availability of and time limits on job coaching and extended employment supports. There have been some positive changes in recent years, e.g., allowing people to work and still get some benefits.
- A partnership between the Council and Americorps might be beneficial to persons with developmental disabilities, particularly if volunteerism is a gateway to employment.
- It was noted that community attitudes about inclusion are a key factor in promoting integrated employment. This fact points to collaboration between the Self-Advocacy Committee and the Integrated Employment Committee. Changing attitudes needs to start with young children.

Empowerment Through Information Committee

Ed Myers, Empowerment Through Information Committee Chairperson, reviewed his committee’s current objectives and proposed changes and shared his committee’s ideas about how the Council could maximize its achievements and impact through new/continued contracts, staff work, Council member work, partnerships, and leveraging. Ed noted that the committee is committed to focusing its work more in the coming year by setting priorities in terms of audiences to be reached, topics to be addressed, and methods of delivery. Ed’s comments are included in the Empowerment Through Information Committee’s report for the retreat, which was provided to participants prior to the retreat.

Comments from participants included the following:

- Information created through contracts and other means should be added to the website.

- The Council's website should continue to be linked to other useful sites, both local and national. While this is helpful to the user, it does present the challenge of keeping the links current.
- The Council website needs to work better with assistive technology.
- The Empowerment Through Information Committee mentioned creating a resource directory. It was noted that a print directory may not be the best presentation for the data in this age of technology.
- There was a question about whether the Council should begin to direct its information communication to the general public. It is likely that this will need to wait for a while, given other priorities, e.g., communication to persons with developmental disabilities, families and other caregivers, providers.
- The Council has the opportunity to leverage the other work it is doing (e.g., promoting integrated employment) through communications such as PSAs and YouTube, as well as its website. It was noted that the Department of Labor has some good free videos on employment that the Council could use, plus the Council has its own new videos. This would advance the work of both the Integrated Employment Committee and the Empowerment Through Information Committee.

Full Group Review and Validation

Following the committee reports, there was a full group discussion of the recommended changes to the State Plan objectives. Suggested changes and related comments are noted below.

Goal #1: #1: Build a self-advocacy alliance comprised of diverse advocacy organizations that is led by persons with developmental disabilities.

Following are the objectives proposed by the Self-Advocacy Committee:

Proposed Objective 1: Enhance the leadership capacity of self-advocates, as measured by their involvement in civic and other leadership activities.

Proposed Objective 2: Strengthen self-advocacy organizations, as measured by the capacity of self-advocacy organizations to create systems change.

Proposed Objective 3: Develop, expand, and strengthen a statewide self-advocacy alliance.

Proposed Objective 4: Build capacity for self-advocacy in underserved areas of the state.

Proposed Objective 5: Build community capacity for inclusion.

Retreat participants recommended the following:

- Define self-advocacy.
- Include reference to *young* adults with developmental disabilities and to families and caregivers.
- Consider a change of language from "self-advocacy" to "empowerment" or "leadership."
- Add something related to leadership development.
- Intentionally target youth in self-advocacy activities.
- Intentionally target families in advocacy activities.
- Partner with generic leadership development organizations and efforts, not only those focused on persons with disabilities.

- Balance opportunities for involvement in self-advocacy activities with employment demands.
- All three committees should share in Objective 5.

Goal #2: The Council seeks to develop, support, and maintain employment for persons with developmental disabilities to provide them with appropriate choices and opportunities to work in jobs matched to their interests and skills while being compensated with appropriate wages and benefits.

Following are the objectives proposed by the Integrated Employment Committee:

Proposed Objective 1: Promote readiness for integrated employment, including self-employment, among persons with developmental disabilities, their families, and others who support them.

Proposed Objective 2: In partnership with employers, promote and support innovative initiatives that expand integrated employment opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities and support sustained employment.

Proposed Objective 3: Lead and support policy change that results in increases in integrated employment of persons with developmental disabilities.

Retreat participants recommended the following:

- Explore and consider action related to policies that impact availability of job coaching.
- Consider whether to include a focus on supports that impact integrated employment, such as housing and transportation.
- Consider addressing education and supports for families, e.g., impacting their employment-related expectations for their family member with developmental disabilities, their knowledge of employment options, and their familiarity with benefits available even when someone is working.
- Consider various types of supports to employers, e.g., employee assessments.
- Explore options for volunteerism as a pathway to employment.
- Consider an advisory group comprised of retired CEOs and roles they might play, e.g., assisting with development of business plans.

Goal #3: Empower persons with developmental disabilities, their families, and persons who support them by linking them to information that promotes informed decision making about their choices and their quality of life.

Following are the objectives proposed by the Empowerment Through Information Committee:

Proposed Objective 1: Increase access to and utilization of the website through use of social media and other means.

Proposed Objective 2: Provide reliable information and education on a variety of topics that are important to persons with developmental disabilities, their families, and persons who support them.

Proposed Objective 3: Provide information, education, and support to underserved populations to increase their access to services and supports and promote community inclusion.

Retreat participants recommended the following:

- Include the general public.

Employment Videos

Three new videos on integrated employment that were developed for the Council were shown during lunch.

Measures of Success and Leveraging Your Work to Maximize Impact

Sheryl reviewed what the DD Act states on the role of Councils, the Federal definitions of leveraging and sustainability, and the importance of leveraging funds. She shared several examples from other states. She noted that leveraged dollars are not the same as match dollars, at least dollars cannot be counted as both. Leveraging strategies could include Funding, Advocating, Convening, Educating, and providing/developing Models (FACEM). A copy of the slides is available.

Participants broke into two tabletop groups to brainstorm opportunities to leverage the work of the Council both internally and externally and then shared their best ideas. The “best ideas” shared by the two groups are listed below:

- Coordinate the activities of all three Council committees to promote a collective impact.
- Consider significantly funding a local best practice project that the Council wants to grow and one from out-of-state that the Council wants to bring to Arizona.
- Focus the work of the Empowerment Through Information Committee on promoting integrated employment. Publish success stories in business journals.
- Engage self-advocates in taking information on integrated employment (including the new employment videos) on the road to businesses.

Reflection on the Retreat

Participants were asked to share what they thought was the most important thing that happened in the retreat today. Following is a list of their comments:

- Refinement and expansion of the State Plan objectives, which was seeded by the committee mini-retreats
- Increasing committee awareness of the other committees’ activities
- Sharing of many perspectives on key issues facing the Council
- Staying on task and on time
- Having a productive meeting

The significant contribution of Council staff was celebrated.

When asked about recommended changes in the retreat format for next year, participants noted that they liked the format and that we should have an equally interesting format next year. They liked that the conversation was concrete and practical. They enjoyed the refreshments. The only requests for next year were better parking and reports back on accomplishments and achievement of the personal goals they shared at the beginning of the retreat.

Next Steps

Larry reiterated that retreat notes would be prepared and shared and that suggestions for changes to State Plan objectives would be sent back to the three committees for further deliberation.

Attachment 1

Breakout Group Transcripts

*Best ideas = **

Group 1 & 3 Notes:

- Influencing committees to get out word of the integrated employment committee
- RSK does a weekly electronic newsletter; include ADDPAC activities and news
- Through self-advocacy organizations, can put ADDPC activities to link to ADDPAC websites
- Having RSK who take referrals to refer to specific Council activities
- *To coordinate, foster, encourage the coordinated activities of all the ADDPAC committees (collective impact)
- Look at changing culture to have leveraging part of everything we do
- Need to look at incorporating “sustainability” and “institutionalization” into RFGA
- *Look at ACF model for letting grants that: 1) fund programs we want to grow, 2) funding successful programs that we want to enter our state

Group 2 & 4 Notes

- *Empowerment Through Information Committee to assist with outreach in support of Integrated Employment Committee
- *Take employment videos on the road to the business community involving self-advocates
- Self-advocates to serve as liaisons to all committees in order to improve collaboration
- Track the dollar value of jobs involved to identify “leverage amount”
- Sharing best practices among committees
- Project SELF
- Periodic events featuring entrepreneurship/self-employment
- Empower Through Information—publish success stories in periodicals
- *Use the Business Journal for publishing success stories involving self-advocates, business owners, family members, etc.
- Capitol Times for legislative issues